

The Voice Of The Lord

Here and Now

Psalm 29

A psalm of David.

(NOTE: This psalm trumpets the voice of the Lord, highlighting the ever-present quality of His voice. It is everywhere. Nature is his mouthpiece. And since the reading of scripture is about to follow, which is also the voice of the Lord, this psalm adds to the truth that God speaks.)

WORSHIP LEADER:

Ascribe to the LORD, O mighty ones,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

CONGREGATION:

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.

WORSHIP LEADER:

The voice of the LORD is over the waters;
the God of glory thunders,
the LORD thunders over the mighty waters.

CONGREGATION:

The voice of the LORD is powerful;
the voice of the LORD is majestic.

WORSHIP LEADER:

The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;
the LORD breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.

CONGREGATION:

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf,
Sirion like a young wild ox.

WORSHIP LEADER:

The voice of the LORD strikes
with flashes of lightning.

CONGREGATION:

The voice of the LORD shakes the desert;
the LORD shakes the Desert of Kadesh.

WORSHIP LEADER:

The voice of the LORD twists the oaks
and strips the forests bare.

CONGREGATION:

And in his temple all cry, "Glory!"

WORSHIP LEADER:

The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;
the LORD is enthroned as King forever.

CONGREGATION:

The LORD gives strength to his people;
the LORD blesses his people with peace.

**Everlasting God
Our Great God**

MEDIA SHOUT

**"Surely the Sovereign Lord does nothing
without revealing it to his servants the prophets.**

Amos 3:7

Roughly 2700 years ago, the words we are about to hear were penned. They contain the heart and purpose of God for Israel. And they tell us a whole lot about the God we serve. Our God loves to reveal himself, to confide.

MEDIA SHOUT

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.

1 Corinthians 2:9-12

PRAYER

You are the same Spirit who breathed these words to the prophet Isaiah. Now this morning, make them come alive to us. Breathe on us, breath of God. Open our ears to hear, and our hearts to receive. In Jesus' name we ask this. Amen.

Isaiah Reading 28-35

READER #1

Woe to that wreath, the pride of Ephraim's drunkards, to the fading flower, his glorious beauty, set on the head of a fertile valley - to that city, the pride of those laid low by wine!

READER #2

See, the Lord has one who is powerful and strong. Like a hailstorm and a destructive wind, like a driving rain and a flooding downpour, he will throw it forcefully to the ground.

READER #1

That wreath, the pride of Ephraim's drunkards, will be trampled underfoot. That fading flower, his glorious beauty, set on the head of a fertile valley, will be like a fig ripe before harvest - as soon as someone sees it and takes it in his hand, he swallows it.

READER #2

In that day the LORD Almighty will be a glorious crown, a beautiful wreath for the remnant of his people. He will be a spirit of justice to him who sits in judgment, a source of strength to those who turn back the battle at the gate.

READER #1

And these also stagger from wine and reel from beer....

READER #2

.....Priests and prophets stagger from beer and are befuddled with wine.....

READER #1

.....they reel from beer, they stagger when seeing visions, they stumble when rendering decisions. All the tables are covered with vomit and there is not a spot without filth.

READER #2

"Who is it he is trying to teach? To whom is he explaining his message? To children weaned from their milk, to those just taken from the breast?"

READER #1

For it is: Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule; a little here, a little there."

READER #2

Very well then, with foreign lips and strange tongues God will speak to this people, to whom he said, "This is the resting place, let the weary rest"; and, "This is the place of repose...."

READER #1

.....but they would not listen.

READER #2

So then, the word of the LORD to them will become: Do and do...

READER #1

.....do and do....

READER #2

.....rule on rule....

READER #1

.....rule on rule....

READER #2

.....a little here,

READER #1

.....a little there,,,,,

READER #2

.....so that they will go and fall backward, be injured and snared and captured.

READER #1

Therefore hear the word of the LORD, you scoffers who rule this people in Jerusalem. You boast, "We have entered into a covenant with death, with the grave we have made an agreement. When an overwhelming scourge sweeps by, it cannot touch us, for we have made a lie our refuge and falsehood our hiding place."

So this is what the Sovereign LORD says.....

READER #2

**"See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone,
a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation;
the one who trusts will never be dismayed.**

READER #1

I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plumb line; hail will sweep away your refuge, the lie, and water will overflow your hiding place.

READER #2

Your covenant with death will be annulled; your agreement with the grave will not stand. When the overwhelming scourge sweeps by, you will be beaten down by it. As often as it comes it will carry you away; morning after morning, by day and by night, it will sweep through."

READER #1

The understanding of this message will bring sheer terror. The bed is too short to stretch out on, the blanket too narrow to wrap around you.

READER #2

The LORD will rise up as he did at Mount Perazim, he will rouse himself as in the Valley of Gibeon - to do his work, his strange work, and perform his task, his alien task.

READER #1

Now stop your mocking, or your chains will become heavier; the Lord, the LORD Almighty, has told me of the destruction decreed against the whole land. Listen and **hear my voice**; pay attention and **hear what I say**.

READER #2

When a farmer plows for planting, does he plow continually? Does he keep on breaking up and harrowing the soil?

READER #1

When he has leveled the surface, does he not sow caraway and scatter cummin?

READER #2

Does he not plant wheat in its place, barley in its plot, and spelt in its field? His God instructs him and teaches him the right way.

READER #1

Caraway is not threshed with a sledge, nor is a cartwheel rolled over cummin; caraway is beaten out with a rod, and cummin with a stick.

READER #2

Grain must be ground to make bread; so one does not go on threshing it forever. Though he drives the wheels of his threshing cart over it, his horses do not grind it.

All this also comes from the LORD Almighty,
wonderful in counsel and magnificent in wisdom.

All This Also Comes

READER #1

Woe to you, Ariel, Ariel, the city where David settled! Add year to year and let your cycle of festivals go on. Yet I will besiege Ariel; she will mourn and lament, she will be to me like an altar hearth. I will encamp

against you all around; I will encircle you with towers and set up my siege works against you.

READER #2

Brought low, you will speak from the ground; your speech will mumble out of the dust. Your voice will come ghostlike from the earth; out of the dust your speech will whisper. But your many enemies will become like fine dust, the ruthless hordes like blown chaff.

READER #1

Suddenly, in an instant, the LORD Almighty will come with thunder and earthquake and great noise, with windstorm and tempest and flames of a devouring fire.

READER #2

Then the hordes of all the nations that fight against Ariel, that attack her and her fortress and besiege her, will be as it is with a dream, with a vision in the night.....

READER #1

.....as when a hungry man dreams that he is eating, but he awakens, and his hunger remains.....

READER #2

.....as when a thirsty man dreams that he is drinking, but he awakens faint, with his thirst unquenched.

READER #1

So will it be with the hordes of all the nations that fight against Mount Zion.

READER #2

Be stunned and amazed, blind yourselves and be sightless....

READER #1

.....be drunk, but not from wine, stagger, but not from beer.

READER #2

The LORD has brought over you a deep sleep.....

READER #1

He has sealed your eyes (the prophets); he has covered your heads (the seers).

READER #2

For you this whole vision is nothing but words sealed in a scroll. And if you give the scroll to someone who can read, and say to him, "Read this, please," he will answer, "I can't; it is sealed."

READER #1

Or if you give the scroll to someone who cannot read, and say, "Read this, please," he will answer, "I don't know how to read."

READER #2

The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men. Therefore once more I will astound these people with wonder upon wonder; the wisdom of the wise will perish, the intelligence of the intelligent will vanish."

Woe to those who go to great depths to hide their plans from the LORD, who do their work in darkness and think "Who sees us? Who will know?" You turn things upside down, as if the potter were thought to be like the clay! Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, "He did not make me"? Can the pot say of the potter, "He knows nothing"?

REFLECTION

READER #1

In a very short time, will not Lebanon be turned into a fertile field and the fertile field seem like a forest? In that day the deaf will hear the words of the scroll, and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind will see. Once more the humble will rejoice in the LORD; the needy will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. The ruthless will vanish, the mockers will disappear, and all who have an eye for evil will be cut down - those who with a word make a man out to be guilty, who ensnare the defender in court and with false testimony deprive the innocent of justice.

READER #2

Therefore this is what the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, says to the house of Jacob: "No longer will Jacob be ashamed; no longer will their faces grow pale. When they see among them their children, the

work of my hands, they will keep my name holy; they will acknowledge the holiness of the Holy One of Jacob, and will stand in awe of the God of Israel. Those who are wayward in spirit will gain understanding; those who complain will accept instruction."

Holy Holy Holy

Isaiah 30

READER #2

"Woe to the obstinate children," declares the LORD, "to those who carry out plans that are not mine, forming an alliance, but not by my Spirit, heaping sin upon sin; who go down to Egypt without consulting me; who look for help to Pharaoh's protection, to Egypt's shade for refuge. But Pharaoh's protection will be to your shame, Egypt's shade will bring you disgrace. Though they have officials in Zoan and their envoys have arrived in Hanes, everyone will be put to shame because of a people useless to them, who bring neither help nor advantage, but only shame and disgrace."

READER #1

An oracle concerning the animals of the Negev: Through a land of hardship and distress, of lions and lionesses, of adders and darting snakes, the envoys carry their riches on donkeys' backs, their treasures on the humps of camels, to that unprofitable nation, to Egypt, whose help is utterly useless. Therefore I call her Rahab the Do-Nothing.

READER #2

Go now, write it on a tablet for them, inscribe it on a scroll, that for the days to come it may be an everlasting witness. These are rebellious people, deceitful children, children unwilling to listen to the LORD's instruction. They say to the seers,

*"See no more visions!" and to the prophets,
"Give us no more visions of what is right!
Tell us pleasant things, prophesy illusions.
Leave this way, get off this path, and stop
confronting us with the Holy One of Israel!"*

READER #1

Therefore, this is what the Holy One of Israel says: "Because you have rejected this message, relied on oppression and depended on deceit, this sin will become for you like a high wall, cracked and bulging, that collapses suddenly, in an instant. It will break in pieces like pottery, shattered so mercilessly that among its pieces not a fragment will be found for taking coals from a hearth or scooping water out of a cistern."

READER #2

This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says:

*"In repentance and rest is your salvation,
in quietness and trust is your strength
but you would have none of it.*

READER #1

You said, 'No, we will flee on horses.' Therefore you will flee! You said, 'We will ride off on swift horses.' Therefore your pursuers will be swift! A thousand will flee at the threat of one; at the threat of five you will all flee away, till you are left like a flagstaff on a mountaintop, like a banner on a hill."

READER #2

Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion. For the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!

READER #1

O people of Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will weep no more. How gracious he will be when you cry for help! As soon as he hears, he will answer you.

READER #2

Although the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them. Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it." Then you will defile your idols overlaid with silver and your images covered with gold; you will throw them away like a menstrual cloth and say to them, "Away with you!"

READER #1

He will also send you rain for the seed you sow in the ground, and the food that comes from the land will be rich and plentiful. In that day your cattle will graze in broad meadows. The oxen and donkeys that work the soil will eat fodder and mash, spread out with fork and shovel.

READER #2

In the day of great slaughter, when the towers fall, streams of water will flow on every high mountain and every lofty hill. The moon will shine like the sun, and the sunlight will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven full days, when the LORD binds up the bruises of his people and heals the wounds he inflicted.

REFLECTION

READER #2

See, the Name of the LORD comes from afar, with burning anger and dense clouds of smoke; his lips are full of wrath, and his tongue is a consuming fire. His breath is like a rushing torrent, rising up to the neck. He shakes the nations in the sieve of destruction; he places in the jaws of the peoples a bit that leads them astray.

READER #1

And you will sing, as on the night you celebrate a holy festival; your hearts will rejoice as when people go up with flutes to the mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel.

READER #2

The LORD will cause men to hear **his majestic voice** and will make them see his arm coming down with raging anger and consuming fire, with cloudburst, thunderstorm and hail. The **voice of the LORD** will shatter Assyria; with his scepter he will strike them down. Every stroke the LORD lays on them with his punishing rod will be to the music of tambourines and harps, as he fights them in battle with the blows of his arm.

READER #1

Topheth has long been prepared; it has been made ready for the king. Its fire pit has been made deep and wide, with an abundance of fire and wood; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of burning sulfur, sets it ablaze.

READER #2

Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help....

READER #1

.....who rely on horses.....

READER #2

.....who trust in the multitude of their chariots and in the great strength of their horsemen, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek help from the LORD.

READER #1

Yet he too is wise and can bring disaster; he does not take back his words. He will rise up against the house of the wicked, against those who help evildoers.

READER #2

But the Egyptians are men and not God; their horses are flesh and not spirit. When the LORD stretches out his hand, he who helps will stumble, he who is helped will fall; both will perish together.

READER #1

This is what the LORD says to me: "As a lion growls, a great lion over his prey - and though a whole band of shepherds is called together against him, he is not frightened by their shouts or disturbed by their clamor - so the LORD Almighty will come down to do battle on Mount Zion and on its heights.

READER #2

Like birds hovering overhead, the LORD Almighty will shield Jerusalem; he will shield it and deliver it, he will 'pass over' it and will rescue it."

READER #1

Return to him you have so greatly revolted against, O Israelites. For in that day every one of you will reject the idols of silver and gold your sinful hands have made.

READER #2

"Assyria will fall by a sword that is not of man; a sword, not of mortals, will devour them. They will flee before the sword and their young men will be put to forced labor. Their stronghold will fall because of terror; at sight of the battle standard their commanders will panic," declares the LORD, whose fire is in Zion, whose furnace is in Jerusalem.

All This Also Comes

READER #2

See, a king will reign in righteousness and rulers will rule with justice. Each man will be like a shelter from the wind and a refuge from the storm, like streams of water in the desert and the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land. Then the *eyes* of those who see will no longer be closed, and the *ears* of those who hear will listen. The *mind* of the rash will know and understand, and the stammering *tongue* will be fluent and clear.

No longer will the fool be called noble nor the scoundrel be highly respected. For **the fool** speaks folly, his mind is busy with evil: He practices ungodliness and spreads error concerning the LORD; the hungry he leaves empty and from the thirsty he withholds water. The scoundrel's methods are wicked, he makes up evil schemes to destroy the poor with lies, even when the plea of the needy is just.

READER #1

But the noble man makes noble plans, and by noble deeds he stands.

READER #2

You women who are so complacent, rise up and listen to me; you daughters who feel secure, hear what I have to say! In little more than a year you who feel secure will tremble; the grape harvest will fail, and the harvest of fruit will not come. Tremble, you complacent women; shudder, you daughters who feel secure! Strip off your clothes, put sackcloth around your waists. Beat your breasts for the pleasant fields for the fruitful vines and for the land of my people, a land overgrown with thorns and briars - yes, mourn for all houses of merriment and for this city of revelry.

READER #1

The fortress will be abandoned, the noisy city deserted; citadel and watchtower will become a wasteland forever, the delight of donkeys, a pasture for flocks, till the Spirit is poured upon us from on

high, and the desert becomes a fertile field, and the fertile field seems like a forest. Justice will dwell in the desert and righteousness live in the fertile field.

READER #2

The fruit of righteousness will be peace....

READER #1

.....the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever.

READER #2

My people will live in peaceful dwelling places.....

READER #1

in secure homes...

READER #2

.....in undisturbed places of rest.

READER #1

Though hail flattens the forest and the city is leveled completely, how blessed you will be, sowing your seed by every stream, and letting your cattle and donkeys range free.

**MEDIA SHOUT
(A CAPPELLA)**

**Like a river glorious, is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious, in its bright increase;
Perfect, yet it floweth, fuller every day,
Perfect, yet it groweth, deeper all the way.**

REFRAIN

**Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.**

READER #2

Woe to you, O destroyer, you who have not been destroyed! Woe to you, O traitor, you who have not been betrayed! When you stop destroying, you will be destroyed; when you stop betraying, you will be betrayed.

*O LORD, be gracious to us;
we long for you.
Be our strength every morning,
our salvation in time of distress.*

READER #1

At the thunder of **your voice**, the peoples flee; when you rise up, the nations scatter. Your plunder, O nations, is harvested as by young locusts; like a swarm of locusts men pounce on it. The LORD is exalted, for he dwells on high; he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness.

READER #2

*He will be the sure foundation for your times,
a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge;
the fear of the LORD is the key to this treasure.*

READER #1

Look, their brave men cry aloud in the streets;
the envoys of peace weep bitterly.
The highways are deserted, no travelers are on the roads.
The treaty is broken,
its witnesses are despised,
no one is respected.
The land mourns and wastes away,
Lebanon is ashamed and withers;
Sharon is like the Arabah, and
Bashan and Carmel drop their leaves.

READER #2

"Now will I arise," says the LORD. "Now will I be exalted; now will I be lifted up. You conceive chaff, you give birth to straw; your breath is a fire that consumes you.

The peoples will be burned as if to lime; like cut thornbushes they will be set ablaze."

READER #1

You who are far away, hear what I have done; you who are near, acknowledge my power!

READER #2

The sinners in Zion are terrified; trembling grips the godless: "Who of us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who of us can dwell with everlasting burning?"

READER #1

He who walks righteously and speaks what is right, who rejects gain from extortion and keeps his hand from accepting bribes, who stops his ears against plots of murder and shuts his eyes against contemplating evil - this is the man who will dwell on the heights, whose refuge will be the mountain fortress. His bread will be supplied, and water will not fail him.

READER #2

Your eyes will see the king in his beauty and view a land that stretches afar. In your thoughts you will ponder the former terror: "Where is that chief officer? Where is the one who took the revenue? Where is the officer in charge of the towers?"

READER #1

You will see those arrogant people no more, those people of an obscure speech, with their strange, incomprehensible tongue. Look upon Zion, the city of our festivals; your eyes will see Jerusalem, a peaceful abode, a tent that will not be moved; its stakes will never be pulled up, nor any of its ropes broken.

READER #2

There the LORD will be our Mighty One. It will be like a place of broad rivers and streams. No galley with oars will ride them, no mighty ship will sail them. For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; it is he who will save us.

READER #1

Your rigging hangs loose: The mast is not held secure, the sail is not spread.

READER #2

Then an abundance of spoils will be divided and even the lame will carry off plunder. No one living in Zion will say, "I am ill"; and the sins of those who dwell there will be forgiven.

REFLECTION

READER #1

Come near, you nations, and listen; pay attention, you peoples! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world, and all that comes out of it! The LORD is angry with all nations; his wrath is upon all their armies. He will totally destroy them, he will give them over to slaughter. Their slain will be thrown out, their dead bodies will send up a stench; the mountains will be soaked with their blood.

READER #2

All the stars of the heavens will be dissolved and the sky rolled up like a scroll; all the starry host will fall like withered leaves from the vine, like shriveled figs from the fig tree. My sword has drunk its fill in the heavens; see, it descends in judgment on Edom, the people I have totally destroyed.

READER #1

The sword of the LORD is bathed in blood, it is covered with fat - the blood of lambs and goats, fat from the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah and a great slaughter in Edom.

READER #2

And the wild oxen will fall with them, the bull calves and the great bulls. Their land will be drenched with blood, and the dust will be soaked with fat. For the LORD has a day of vengeance, a year of retribution, to uphold Zion's cause. Edom's streams will be turned into pitch, her dust into burning sulfur; her land will become blazing pitch! It will not be quenched night and day; its smoke will rise forever. From generation to generation it will lie desolate; no one will ever pass through it again.

READER #1

The desert owl and screech owl will possess it; the great owl and the raven will nest there. God will stretch out over Edom the measuring line of chaos and the plumb line of desolation.

Her nobles will have nothing there to be called a kingdom, all her princes will vanish away.

Thorns will overrun her citadels, nettles and brambles her strongholds. She will become a haunt for jackals, a home for owls.

Desert creatures will meet with hyenas, and wild goats will bleat to each other; there the night creatures will also repose and find for themselves places of rest.

The owl will nest there and lay eggs, she will hatch them, and care for her young under the shadow of her wings; there also the falcons will gather, each with its mate.

READER #2

Look in the scroll of the LORD and read: None of these will be missing, not one will lack her mate. For it is his mouth that has given the order, and his Spirit will gather them together. He allots their portions; his hand distributes them by measure. They will possess it forever and dwell there from generation to generation.

READER #1

The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.

READER #2

The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God.

READER #1

Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way.

READER #2

Say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you."

READER #1

Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

READER #2

Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy.

READER #1

Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert.

READER #2

The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

READER #1

And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; wicked fools will not go about on it. No lion will be there, nor will any ferocious beast get up on it; they will not be found there.

READER #2

But only the redeemed will walk there, and the ransomed of the LORD will return.

READER #1

They will enter Zion with singing.....

READER #2

.....everlasting joy will crown their heads.

READER #1

Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

Here Is Your God